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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BERLIN 001507

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [NATO](#) [EAID](#) [GM](#) [AF](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: GERMANY WORRIES THAT HOLDING SECOND AFGHANISTAN  
CONFERENCE COULD DELAY DECISION ON ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

REF: A. STATE 120807

[B](#). BERLIN 1502

[C](#). BERLIN 1470

Classified By: DCM GREG DELAWIE. REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[1](#). (S) SUMMARY. Both the German MFA and MOD reiterated that while Germany would rhetorically support the President's announcement next week of the U.S. way ahead in Afghanistan and Pakistan, any additional German contributions would have to wait until the Afghan government made the necessary commitments at the planned international conference in London in late January. The MFA raised concerns that the London conference might be limited to dealing with security issues, while a second conference in Kabul in March or April would be charged with governance and development. If this occurs, the German government would probably have to postpone consideration of additional contributions until after the second conference. The MFA urges U.S. support for the London conference taking a "holistic approach" and having the Kabul conference focus on implementation. The German Development Ministry (BMZ) raised concerns about NATO assuming a coordinating role in civilian assistance and confirmed that it would contribute an additional 52 million euros for Afghan development beyond the 92 million budgeted for 2009. END SUMMARY.

FOLLOW-UP WITH MFA, MOD AND BMZ

[2](#). (SBU) DCM delivered ref A points to MOD State Secretary Ruediger Wolf and MFA Afghanistan/Pakistan Special Representative Bernd Muetzelburg on November 25, reinforcing the initial demarche that Ambassador Murphy made to Chancellery National Security Advisor Christoph Heusgen on November 24 (ref B). Econoff also delivered the ref A points to Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) South and Central Asia Division Chief Christiane Hieronymus and Afghanistan Desk Officer Martin Kipping.

"POSITIVE ECHO" PROMISED

[3](#). (S) Both Wolf and Muetzelburg welcomed advance notice of the President's planned announcement of the U.S. way ahead on Afghanistan and Pakistan and took note of the U.S. request for an expression of political support immediately after the announcement. Muetzelburg assured the DCM that Germany would respond positively and "stand at your side." He emphasized, however, that the "positive echo" from Berlin could only be "in general terms" because the German government would not be able to respond with immediate commitments of new contributions for Afghanistan. Repeating the same message that we heard from Heusgen, both Muetzelburg and Wolf noted

that any additional contributions could only come after the proposed international conference on Afghanistan in early 2010 -- and that assumed the Afghan government made all the necessary commitments at the conference in terms of eliminating corruption, improving governance and gradually assuming responsibility from the international community.

#### SECOND CONFERENCE IN KABUL?

14. (S) Muetzelburg expressed concern about recent developments regarding the conference. He noted that the proposal from Chancellor Merkel and PM Brown was to hold a single Afghanistan conference on January 28 in London, the results of which would enable the German government to obtain modifications of the ISAF mandate and announce additional contributions by as early as February. But according to Muetzelburg, there was now a strong push by the Afghan government, which never liked the imagery of going "hat in hand" to a European-based conference to seek international support, to hold a second Afghanistan conference in Kabul in March or April to demonstrate Afghan sovereignty and ownership of the process. To reconcile the two competing conferences, the current plan was to split the work: the London conference would address security (military and police), while the Kabul conference would address governance and development.

#### NEED FOR "HOLISTIC APPROACH" IN LONDON

15. (S) Muetzelburg warned that if this turned out to be the result, it could significantly delay Germany's new

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contributions since domestic critics would almost certainly insist that any decision be put off until after the second conference. Muetzelburg asked for our support in ensuring that the London conference took a "holistic approach" and was not restricted only to security issues. He suggested that a better division of labor was for the London conference to determine the new benchmarks in all three pillars of activity (security, governance and development) and for the Kabul conference to focus on implementation. Muetzelburg also raised the concern that having the new benchmarks negotiated by the end of January, in time for the London conference, would be very challenging, given that all the relevant players in the new Afghan government would probably not be in place until early January.

#### DOING LESS IN OEF TO ENABLE DOING MORE IN ISAF?

16. (S) In response to our question about what more Germany might be able to do in the military sphere after the London conference, assuming the Afghans made all the necessary commitments, Wolf at MOD declined to speculate on how many more troops Germany might send. Instead, he emphasized that in addition to increasing development aid, Germany would step up its training of the Afghan national security forces, both military and police. Wolf also confirmed that while the parliamentary mandate for Bundeswehr participation in OEF no longer has an Afghanistan component, the OEF and ISAF mandates remained closely associated with one another in the minds of many. There was much internal discussion about whether it would be possible to "do less in OEF" in return for "doing more in ISAF." Wolf agreed that the Social Democratic Party's (SPD) decision to vote against OEF when it comes up for renewal in December was probably a tactical move by the leadership to shore up rank-and-file support for ISAF. He emphasized, however, that MOD continued to support German participation in OEF as a sign of solidarity with the U.S. and that it was very important to maintain.

#### CONCERNS ABOUT ANA SUSTAINABILITY, CIVILIAN COORDINATION

17. (S) Kipping told econoff that BMZ, like the U.S., welcomed President Karzai's inaugural speech and commitments to reform. He said BMZ wanted to focus more on conditionality,

and welcomed any U.S. thinking on the subject. On the ANA Trust Fund, he said BMZ was concerned about fiscal sustainability, and wanted to begin a discussion on the build-up of fiscal burdens that may have long-term consequences. Kipping requested more detail on our thinking on integration of the civilian effort with the ISAF mission. Reiterating what we have heard previously from the MFA (ref C), Kipping said BMZ has doubts that NATO and other actors have the capacity to coordinate civilian development projects, and strongly preferred that a "strengthened UNAMA" retain the coordinating role. Eventually, the Afghans could take over coordination, as they had effectively done already in the education sector.

#### DEVELOPMENT FUNDING INCREASED BY MORE THAN 50 PERCENT

18. (SBU) Hieronymus and Kipping confirmed press reports that BMZ will increase its development assistance to Afghanistan by an additional 52 million euros this year, bringing total BMZ spending for Afghanistan in 2009 to 144 million euros. Combined with assistance from MFA, total German assistance in 2009 will amount to over 250 million euros. The additional money comes from existing BMZ funds intended for "regional projects in Asia," but which had not yet been programmed. Approval by the Bundestag is not needed. The increase is intended to help stabilize the troubled Kunduz Province, and will focus on four areas: 1) creation of a flexible regional development fund for job creation and good governance initiatives; 2) labor-intensive infrastructure projects; 3) BMZ's rule of law program; and 4) construction of technical schools. Kipping acknowledged that not all of the money, which is to be channeled via the German development implementing agency (GTZ) and development bank (KfW), could be spent in 2009.

#### COMMENT

19. (S) We have a strong self-interest in ensuring that the London conference in late January takes a "holistic" approach and deals with all three pillars of activity. Otherwise,

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there could be a long delay in Germany's consideration of additional troops, trainers and other assistance in support of the new way forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan. German officials are being extremely careful not to speculate about possible future troop increases in advance of December 4, when parliamentarians are scheduled to vote on a roll-over the current ISAF mandate with an unchanged troop ceiling of 4,500. Given the SPD's threat to vote against the mandate if it included a troop increase, the government does not want to give the SPD any excuse to abandon the mandate at this point. MURPHY